



# Climate Action Plan Dudley Metropolitan Borough 2023

**Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) should adopt an ambitious Climate Action Plan to contribute to West Midlands, UK and global targets to address the climate and ecological emergency.**

*This action plan has been prepared by Friends of the Earth: Stourbridge in consultation with members of the public from Dudley Borough. All statistics and targets used in this action plan are taken from research by Friends of the Earth and are available online at*

*<https://takeclimateaction.uk/climate-action/how-climate-friendly-your-area-enter-your-postcode-see-results-your-community>*

We are facing a global climate and ecological emergency: the biggest threat we've ever seen to humanity's existence and much of the natural world. Species extinction, food shortages, sea-level rises and millions of lives and livelihoods lost. Those most affected most by the crisis will be the most vulnerable in every society so this is an issue of social justice as well as a Climate Emergency. Our only way of avoiding this is to do our part towards achieving the UK goal of zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. This will contribute to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels.

In July 2020 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) declared a Climate Emergency. By adopting this action plan Dudley MBC could take positive action and make progress to reduce the effects of the Climate Emergency they declared in 2020.

### **Priorities for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council:**

- **Putting our climate at the heart of local decision making:** to ensure that our climate and nature restoration goals are front and centre in all decision making and investments.
- **Protect the most vulnerable:** to ensure that those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are properly supported and protected.
- **Land Use and Nature:** restore nature to help drawdown carbon pollution from the atmosphere and to ensure everyone has access to nature in nearby green spaces
- **Transport:** reduce air pollution to meet World Health Organisation levels, match European best practice in the use of buses cycling and walking and ensure all vehicles are zero emission.
- **Power:** enable and support the growth and use of green energy, ensure energy is not wasted and prevent the development of new fossil fuel extraction.
- **Buildings:** ensure all homes are well insulated to minimum EPC C level, eradicate fuel poverty and make a proportional contribution to the 1 million eco-heating heat pumps that need to be fitted in the UK each year.
- **Waste:** achieve a zero-waste area by 2030 where all waste reused or recycled as part of a circular economy approach.
- **Influencing others:** encourage and support other entities with their contribution to the fight against the climate emergency.
- **Increasing resources:** have sufficient resource to invest in the changes needed to substantially improve Dudley MBC's actions to meet climate goals Dudley Borough and minimise the most severe effects of climate change.

## Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Action Plan

### 1. Putting our climate at the heart of local decision making:

Our aim is to ensure that our climate and nature restoration goals are front and centre in all decision making and investments for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

This process involves all decisions made on behalf of the Dudley Borough and its role within the West Midlands Combined Authority; regarding the management public services; the promotion of the best interests of the local community and in day-to-day operational management. Dudley Council should act as a positive role model in the discharge of its duties and. Inclusive engagement with citizens ensures that the changes made are sustainable.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

|  | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a Climate Action plan with interim and longer term, measurable targets: 2041 or sooner.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|  | <p>Initiate a plan for Green Jobs and Skills in Dudley:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1770 green apprenticeships could be created in Dudley by 2023 so young people can get the skills to work in the green economy.</li> <li>• 2599 green jobs could be created in Dudley by 2030, according to the Local Government Association.</li> <li>• Potential jobs by industry: 127 in low-carbon services. 902 in low-carbon heating. 826 in energy efficiency. 169 in alternative fuels. 393 in low-emissions vehicles. 182 in low-carbon electricity.</li> </ul> |
|  | <p>Make a commitment to zero carbon emissions by 2030 and ensure political commitment is in line with Climate Change Act carbon budgets.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|  | <p>Appoint a minimum of 2 Dudley MBC councillors one in the cabinet and one in the shadow cabinet as Climate Champions to support the development of a carbon reduction pathway and strategy for Dudley Borough.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | <p>Establish a cross-party Climate Action select committee to scrutinise the climate emergency and nature restoration action planning, target setting and progress by all Council departments.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | <p>Publish an annual independent and audited report on progress to meet agreed targets on the climate emergency and nature restoration.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | <p>Summarise annual reports in full-page adverts in free newspapers and household information bulletins; in libraries; on the Council website (large print format available)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|  | <p>All council business; to include whether plans and recommendations would help or hinder climate action, air quality and nature plans</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|  | Ensure all committees monitor the climate emergency and nature restoration targets and advise on proposals drafted by all committees.                                      |
|  | Align all DMBC statutory and non-statutory plans, policies and guidance with respective carbon reduction pathways and nature restoration plan, including procurement.      |
|  | Monitor and report on economic, quality of life and health benefits of Climate actions in the annual report.                                                               |
|  | Ensure guidelines for sustainable procurement practice by Dudley MBC are implemented following the Greener Dudley Public Consultation.                                     |
|  | Divest from all investment in fossil fuels immediately and report actions to full Council.                                                                                 |
|  | Review and improve Dudley MBC communications and consultations with citizens in decision-making processes.                                                                 |
|  | Set up a Citizen's Forum of residents, local environmental groups and businesses to steer the action plan and guide progress following climate committee annual reporting. |

## **2. Protect the most vulnerable:**

Greenhouse gas emissions contribute to global temperature rises and we already know we must reduce them to avoid 1.5°C of warming.

In Dudley 42% of greenhouse gas emissions come from housing. Only 31% of homes are well insulated and 27.9% of households in the area are in fuel poverty. Improving housing insulation and efficiency helps to reduce household bills also reduces the carbon footprint.

The remainder of greenhouse gas emissions in the Borough come from transport: 31%, industrial and commercial emissions: 28%.

Trees provide a home for nature, clean up air pollution and reduce flood risk. Dudley Borough has 64 neighbourhoods with high social flood risk for surface flooding (Nov. 2019) taking account a range of vulnerability factors.

Our aim is to ensure that those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are properly supported and protected.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

|  | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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|  | Ensure all homes in the Borough are fully insulated in order to lift people out of fuel poverty by 2030.                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | Dudley's official government target is 25,383 but the FoE Target for Dudley is to fit 55100 heat pumps by 2030.                                                                                                                                                       |
|  | Target flood risk areas for support with adaptation policies, actions and funding in order to help people living there prepare for extreme weather, respond and recover when it occurs.                                                                               |
|  | Identify built-up areas at risk of becoming heat islands as global temperatures rise and target adaptation policies, actions and spending in these areas.                                                                                                             |
|  | Identify areas with poor air quality, work in partnership with neighbouring local authorities and take actions to reduce transport and industrial emissions in border areas.                                                                                          |
|  | Increase trees and green spaces locally to improve air quality and quality of life. Develop new quality green spaces where they don't exist particularly in neighbourhoods where people are particularly vulnerable to heatwaves, flooding or are deprived of nature. |
|  | Promote sustainable, healthy lifestyles and businesses in the borough with practical advice on how to reduce domestic carbon footprint and waste.                                                                                                                     |
|  | Ensure the voices of the community are represented in a Citizen's Climate Forum.                                                                                                                                                                                      |

### 3. Land Use and Nature:

**TREES:** play an important role in sucking the main greenhouse, gas carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it as carbon. They also provide a home for nature, clean up air pollution and reduce flood risk. Only 7% of the Dudley area, including current designated Green Belt areas are woodland. The highest proportion in similar areas is 39%. *National Forest Inventory (NFI)*

Our aim is to restore nature to help drawdown carbon pollution from the atmosphere and to ensure everyone has access to nature in nearby green spaces.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

|  | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|  | Initiate a Local Nature Recovery Strategy as part of a requirement to meet biodiversity targets. Our Local Plan should aim to reduce greenhouse gases, restore nature and increase resilience to extreme weather events. |

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|  | Dudley area should aim to increase tree cover to 20% by 2030.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | Pledge to work with local community and environment organisations, businesses, public services such as hospitals and schools to identify funding and resources to ensure the trees planting target across the borough is achieved.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|  | Update local planning strategies to ensure trees are properly protected by Tree Protection Orders. Improve communication with the public and ensure regular reviews of trees in planning applications are undertaken by a tree protection officer.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|  | Re-wild areas in parks and town centres, verges and traffic islands in partnership with local community and environment groups to increase biodiversity and draw down carbon pollution with increased planting of wild flowers and meadow.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | Protect existing and create new spaces, green belt and locally designated nature sites as a top priority in line with Dudley's Green Space strategy and the creation of the Black Country Geopark to increase access for Dudley residents to improve physical and mental health and reduce obesity.                                                                                                                                     |
|  | Support the protection of existing green belt in line with the new tree planting target and Dudley's Green Space strategy. Green Belt sites on the south and west borders of the borough are potentially under threat as their greenbelt status is reviewed and the regional need to increase the number of houses to be built. As tree cover is low development of the greenbelt sites could impact on the local tree planting target. |
|  | Work with neighbouring local authorities to protect green belt land across our borders so that new developments do not impact negatively on Dudley Borough infrastructure e.g. South Staffordshire.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|  | Protect locally designated nature sites and create new green corridors between them for wildlife as an integral part of Dudley's Green Space Strategy and the importance of the public's access to green space.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | Re-designate some brownfield sites as nature sites e.g. Corbett Meadow. It is currently considered to be a brownfield site and therefore vulnerable for development despite the range of wildlife, meadow and recreational use by the local community.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | Transition to an organic method of weed control and phase out herbicides and pesticides, such as glyphosate, as soon as possible but no later than 2025.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | Develop the role of park rangers across the borough as green community champions to facilitate education, awareness and community pride initiatives in partnership with local voluntary, community and environment groups.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

#### 4. Transport:

In Dudley 31% of greenhouse gas emissions are from transport; the majority of which is private transport. Only 11% of people commute by public transport; 1% cycle and 8% walk. 8% of commuters share their car when commuting in the Dudley area.

The Dudley area has 22 electric vehicle charging points (EV chargers) (*April 2019*). There should be 1 EV charger for every thousand cars by 2030 (*Committee on Climate Change*)

Our aim is to reduce air pollution to meet World Health Organisation levels, match European best practice in the use of buses cycling and walking and ensure all vehicles are zero emission.

#### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| Increase to 50%: people commuting by public transport, cycling, and walking by 2030 in the borough.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Prioritise the pedestrian. Reduce the need to use cars through managing developments in a local plan: Promote car sharing and discourage car use for short journeys by providing car sharing clubs parking unless and promote health benefits of walking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Give all Dudley Borough residents free bus travel on the existing platinum buses with traffic light priority for buses on every nearside lane.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Publish regular air pollution readings in traffic hot spots such as Netherton, Quarry Bank; Brierley Hill and Dudley from 2021. Promote information about air pollution and risks to health of engine idling particularly near schools and hospitals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Require taxis to be electric powered by renewable energy sources through licencing by 2030.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| DMBC business / fleet to convert to electric vehicles and or use an electric car pool share service powered by renewables by 2030.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| On residential streets introduce more limits on traffic flow for example the <a href="#">Street Play</a> initiative uses existing council powers to close a street to traffic for several hours, allowing children to play together in the street. This builds community and is particularly beneficial for residents with no gardens and limited access to parks. Play streets today could be accompanied by an initiative to green the street with trees and planters, and some of the closures could even be made permanent. |
| Enable rapid shift to electric vehicles by installing more electric vehicle EV charging points powered by renewables. In Dudley there should be at least 156 EV chargers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Invest in more cycle lanes and encourage cycling as identified in Dudley Health Improvement Plan. Incentivise staff undertaking journey's on DMB Council business to engage in a bicycle share / purchase scheme.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|  | Invest in a sustainable, safe, clean public transport network using electric vehicles powered by renewable energy.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|  | Encourage walking as part of the Dudley Health Improvement Plan using walking routes through green corridors linking designated green spaces and parks.                                                                                                                                                |
|  | Work through the West Midlands Combined Authority to improve local transport train infrastructure, stock and lines and links including 120 Kms (74 miles) of principal mainline railway through Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall to be finished and link through to Stourbridge Junction mainline station. |
|  | Support the cancellation of the HS2 Rail project and instead invest in improving and strengthening current rail network infrastructure.                                                                                                                                                                |

## 5. Power:

In Dudley 28% of greenhouse gas emissions are industrial and commercial emissions. Dudley has 14MW of renewable power. On average 1MW of renewable power produces enough energy for around 125 homes

Our aim is to enable and support the growth and use of green energy, ensure energy is not wasted and prevent the development of new fossil fuel extraction.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
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| Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least <b>13%</b> per annum to achieve zero targets by 2030.                                                                                                                                |  |
| Dudley MBC should enable and support the growth and use of green energy, Our FoE target for Dudley is 212 Gwh by 2030.                                                                                                           |  |
| Identify areas suitable for local installation of renewable energy sources in the local plan for the Black Country.                                                                                                              |  |
| DMBC to procure only truly renewable electricity by only using suppliers who purchase both the renewable electricity and its accompanying Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificate directly from its generators. |  |
| Switch street lighting to well designed and well directed LED lights for minimum power consumption.                                                                                                                              |  |
| Retrofit Dudley MBC's own estate through better insulation, glazing and use of renewable sources by 2030.                                                                                                                        |  |

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|  | Require new build private sector, community and local authority developments to integrate renewable energy such as solar thermal, PV or ground source heat pumps and demonstrate models of good practise as zero impact by 2030. (See heat pump target) |
|  | Support the development of renewable energy and energy storage. Aim to install on every Dudley building with E, W, S roofs, PV solar, with battery storage, to become mini power stations.                                                              |
|  | Divest from all fossil fuels investment, invest in renewable energy projects, oppose fracking and other fossil fuel extraction.                                                                                                                         |

## 6. Buildings:

Only 31% of homes are well insulated in Dudley. 27.9% of households in the area are in fuel poverty, spending more than 10% of their disposable income on energy bills. Poor insulation is a major contribution to this problem.

Our aim is to ensure all homes are well insulated to minimum EPC C level, eradicate fuel poverty by 2030 and make a proportional contribution to the 1 million ground source heat pumps that need to be fitted in the UK each year.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

| Action |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|        | Retrofit council owned properties; including refurbishing void properties; with high levels of insulation. Upgrading the insulation of 9,513 homes per annum within the Dudley area will ensure all homes are properly insulated by 2030, lifting as many people as possible out of fuel poverty. |
|        | Help energy companies target fuel poor or vulnerable households with energy efficient measures.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | Enforce building and minimum energy efficient standards in the private rented sector.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | Require all homes built in Dudley Borough to be extremely energy efficient, using the Passivhaus standard or similar. Require higher standards than current national standards of privately built new homes.                                                                                      |
|        | Develop a heating and energy efficient strategy for the Dudley Borough by 2025.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | Incentivise the setting up of co-working community spaces across the borough; e.g. in libraries to reduce the need to travel.                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 7. Waste:

Producing and distributing things we buy consumes fossil fuels and contributes to increased greenhouse gas emissions. What we discard generates more greenhouse gas emissions by its being transported away and then processed for example by incineration. It follows therefore that we must reduce our consumption to reduce harmful emissions by re-using, repairing and repurposing what we already have.

Dudley reuses, recycles and composts only 36% of its household waste. This compares to the best figure of 69% in similar local authorities, while Wales has set its local authorities a target of 70% by 2025. Some waste disposal is contracted out in the borough and some waste still goes to landfill. Our aim is to be a zero-waste area by 2030 where all waste reused or recycled as part of a circular economy approach.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

|  | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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|  | Stop sending domestic and industrial waste to landfill either in the UK or abroad by the Council and or it's contractors by 2025.                                                                                                                  |
|  | Send zero waste to incineration by 2025.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | Implement food waste recycling by 2022. This will be a national requirement by 2023. Use food waste according to the food waste hierarchy of prevent, reuse, recycle and ensure non-recyclable biodegradable waste is used to make biogas.         |
|  | Promote reduction of waste at source. Work with businesses and services to reduce waste at source and take greater responsibility for recycling.                                                                                                   |
|  | Implement improved communication with the public about how and what they can recycle by 2022. Promote community sharing exchange, re-purposing at public waste management sites for repair and reuse of goods. Link in to charitable fund raising. |
|  | Increase the range of plastic and other waste materials recycled in Dudley Borough in partnership with businesses and charities by 2023.                                                                                                           |
|  | Encourage / incentivise local schools and hospitals food services and take-away businesses to ban single use plastic and introduce biodegradable packaging.                                                                                        |
|  | Implement in Dudley Catering Services in schools and support local hospitals to cook fresh food from scratch on school premises to minimise waste and to use plastic or non biodegradable packaging.                                               |
|  | Adopt circular economy waste policies in all plans, contracts and strategies. Encourage local businesses to do the same.                                                                                                                           |

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|  | Remove single use plastic waste vending machines from leisure centres, schools, community facilities, libraries and public halls immediately.          |
|  | Incentivise local businesses with lower business rates and promote shop local in town centres and reduce waste of online shopping packaging.           |
|  | Install drinking water taps in parks, leisure, library and community facilities and town centres and encourage people to refill.                       |
|  | Promote plastic free status for all community and town centres in partnership with Surfers Against Sewage.                                             |
|  | Work with community / environmental groups to achieve 'clear water' by removing dumped waste and single use plastics from watercourses in the borough. |

## 8. Influencing others:

We want to make our voice heard by the national government and secure increased devolution to local level and increase democratic control. Our aim is to encourage and support other entities with their contribution to avert a climate emergency.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

| Action |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | Ensure the Sub-national Transport Body strategy is in line with carbon budgets                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | Influence Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Combined Authority to ensure all decisions are in line with the climate reduction pathway, nature restoration plans and a circular economy.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | Provide support to SME businesses in the Borough to access funds and expertise to reduce carbon pollution and operate more sustainable businesses.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | Encourage shops, businesses, schools, leisure centres, hospitals minimise catering waste, minimise food packaging and recycle food waste. Encourage the production of freshly prepared meals, onsite, in accordance with the official Eatwell Guide on healthy eating; offering healthy options; a majority of plant-based options and only ethically farmed dairy and meat-based products. |
|        | Encourage and support all local farmers to farm organically and ethically                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | Work with partners such as the West Midlands Combined Authority to secure more regulatory powers, fundraising powers and finance to deliver on our aspirations (for example those identified by Friends of the Earth) and join forces with others to push for a national climate action plan that is commensurate with the climate and nature emergency.                                    |

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|  | Set up a citizen's assembly of residents and businesses to steer the action plan and guide progress following climate committee annual reporting. |
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## 9. Increasing Resources and Raising Money:

Our aim is to have sufficient resource to invest in the changes needed to substantially improve Dudley MBC's performance, restore nature and meet climate goals so that Dudley Borough can minimise the impact of climate change and deliver our fair share of greenhouse gas reductions.

### What Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) will do:

|  | Action                                                                                                                                                |
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|  | Introduce workplace parking levy and parking fees across the borough; in order to reinvest revenue in sustainable public transport.                   |
|  | Raise money from UK Municipal Bonds Agency for low carbon infrastructure.                                                                             |
|  | Use legal and planning mechanisms to fund climate actions and nature restoration projects e.g. Section 106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy. |
|  | Implement licensing of the private rented sector to cover enforcement costs of minimum efficiency standards.                                          |

2023: FoE Stourbridge